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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: US-INDIA RELATIONS, WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS, SENATOR OBAMA'S ELECTION, KASHMIR ELECTIONS, INDO - PAK RELATIONS, AFGHANISTAN; NEW DELHI.

This cable reports on relevant media reaction from India's large non-English press. Embassy New Delhi reports on English-language media via email in the daily "Early Edition." USG customers please write to Geeta Krishali (KrishaliG@state.gov) to subscribe to the "Early Edition."

US-INDIA RELATIONS

¶ 1. "HURDLES OF EMERGING NATION," editorial in the November 24 DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily: "The U.S. Directorate of National Intelligence assessment is in line with the expectations of many Indians that India will emerge as a major world power by 2025. Hopefully, this U.S. assessment will inspire the policymakers of India, but we will have to clear serious economic and social hurdles. Besides ethnic and regional insurgencies, the terrorist forces can also obstruct nation's progress. How can it be ignored that a large section of the country's population is still below poverty line. So, the fascinating figures of our economic growth are meaningless. The nation cannot progress with the lack of essential elements --accountability and transparency-- in the Indian administration. Similarly, the political system does not seem to be helpful either in realizing the dream of making the nation a superpower by 2020."

WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS

¶12. "NEW BASIS OF ECONOMY," op-ed article in the November 24 DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily by strategic and international affairs analyst K. Subrahmanyam: "The Washington G-20 economic summit is the irrefutable evidence of the globalization of international economy. Unlike the Great Depression of 1930 all the major countries have agreed to handle the current economic turmoil globally in a cooperative manner. The IMF has forecasted that the economies of U.S., E.U. and Japan will depend on the developing countries to overcome the economic recession... It is clear from the G-20 summit that the world has become multi-polar and the basis of power balancing is shifting. The Bush administration was sensitive to the changes taking place in power balancing and therefore, it helped India become a world power. Barak Obama's declarations are also giving similar indications. Including Indians in his new team is perhaps such a signal. Now a lot will depend on whom does he give the charge of his important ministries?"

¶13. "THE U.S. ECONOMY CANNOT SUFFER ANY HARM!" the first-part of an editorial-page analysis in the November 25 independent Kolkata Bengali daily, ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA by Dr. Anup Sinha, Professor of Economics at Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Calcutta. "The first question that comes to the mind is that how could such a huge volume of debts stand on such a small foundation.

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What did they do who were in charge of regulation? Why didn't the rating agencies give out any signal regarding extreme risk involvement in the entire business? The financial institutions did not show detailed transactions of these debt instruments in their balance sheets in order to evade attention of regulatory agencies. The transactions were so complex and unique that there was no reliable benchmark available in the market regarding the worth of an instrument. Problems did not arise so long as the market was booming and real estate price was soaring. A confidence was generated all around about the immunity of the U.S. economy. No one had an inkling of the impending crises of the real estate market. But, unfortunately, the real estates failed to keep the promise."

SENATOR OBAMA'S ELECTION

¶14. "TO WHAT EXTENT OBAMA WILL CHANGE U.S.," commentary in the November 23 AMAR UJALA Hindi daily by Bharat Dogra: "Barack Obama's victory is certainly worth welcoming, but is it right to expect a significant change? The U.S. politics, basically, revolves around two parties-- Republican and Democratic. Both parties are almost of the same opinion on many issues like -maintaining U.S. pre-eminence, promoting Israeli interests in the West Asia and giving special importance to the American companies etc. Many powerful lobbies are active in U.S. to ensure continuity in the important U.S. policies. Firstly, Obama could not project any outstanding traits from his speeches. If he wants a change, he will have to face the powerful U.S. lobbies.... For a basic change the U.S. democratic system needs to be changed, which will open doors to the political parties other than Republican and Democratic, and those of the opinion of bringing fundamental change in the political structure."

KASHMIR ELECTIONS

¶15. "A SLAP ON THE FACE OF THE SEPERATISTS IN KASHMIR"

editorial in the November 25, 2008, Mumbai edition of centrist Marathi daily SAKAAL. "The 64 pre cent voter turnout in the first phase of polls in the troubled Jammu and Kashmir state is a welcome development. It speaks of the belief of the local people in the democratic process. Despite the Hurriyat Conference poll boycott call, early snowing and freezing temperatures, people thought it was worth their while to stand in queues and cast their precious vote. Even the Election Commission was skeptical about the popular response to the polls. The commissioner in fact term the elections as a risk. And the risk was of course evident in the sporadic incidents of violence. Hundreds of protesters stoned a polling station and clashed with security forces at Kurhama near Ganderbal. Violence temporarily halted voting at the booth, but scores of voters soon returned to cast the ballot..."

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INDO - PAK RELATIONS

16. "EXTRAORDINARY INITIATIVE BY PAKISTANI PRESIDENT", editorial in the November 24 right-of-center Urdu daily "RASHTRIYA SAHARA", New Delhi: "Giving a new dimension to the Indo-Pak bilateral relations, President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari ensured that his country will never use any nuclear weapon first. This statement ignited hope, once gain, that talks may resume for resolving the mutual disputes. And both the countries will raze down the walls of differences and misunderstandings for solving the problems of their people. Commencement of bilateral trade through corridors in Jammu and Kashmir is a concrete initiative. We should hope that comprehensive negotiations between India and Pakistan will resume after assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. It must be noted that end of clash between two major powers in the region will bring peace, prosperity and unity in South Asia."

AFGHANISTAN

17. "AFGHANISTAN AND AMERICA", editorial in the November 24 right-of-center Urdu daily "MUNSIF", Hyderabad: "It seems that America and its allies in Afghanistan did not learn any lesson from their extremely shameful defeats, and America is vying for its further defeats by trying to defeat insurmountable Afghan people. In fact, the first and foremost purpose of America is to capture Afghanistan and completely eradicate Taliban. Knowing that America can never defeat Taliban, the former considers its presence in Afghanistan essential because, in this way, it can restrict them within Afghanistan. Otherwise, Taliban militants would create problems for America in Iraq and even in Iran. One of American objectives is to smash Islam-loving tribes of Afghanistan. Due to these reasons, American forces along with allied forces will remain stationed in Afghanistan till any Moses rise against American Pharaoh."

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